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ABSTRACT

Because of the close proximity of countries in the Middle East, broadcast signals freely cross national boundaries, bringing not always friendly endemic populations into contact with each other through radio and television programming--a fact that has not been lost on the governments which fund broadcasting facilities. National anthems are chauvinistic by design and in the Middle East, the various interpretations aired on national television systems make them become specific carriers of national pride to historically opposing countries. Content analysis was used to explore the broadcast style and design of the national anthems able to be seen in Haifa, Israel, which includes anthems from Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, broadcast on six different stations. All stations broadcast some of their programming in English, and all stations ended their broadcast day with a rendition of their national anthem exactly as it is done in the United States. All the anthems showed similar characteristics including the expected display of flags. However, only the Jordanian stations featured singers and lyrics--all other countries' versions of their anthems were orchestral only. The Jordanian stations featured high school students in western dress singing in one version and soldiers singing in another version; the Lebanese featured land settings of peaceful scenery; and the Israelis featured a visual fly-over of Jerusalem. Mass media students, who usually are confined to studying American media, can benefit from examining foreign media approaches. (Contains 10 references.) (NKA)

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Modern Tools of Propaganda:
Television Treatments of National Anthems in the Middle East

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Abstract

Due to the close proximity of countries in the Middle East, broadcast signals freely cross national freely bringing not always friendly endemic populations into contact with each other through radio and television programming. This fact has not been lost on the governments which fund and broadcast those facilities.

National anthems are chauvanistic by design and in the setting of the Middle East, the various interpretations aired on national televsion systems make them become specific carriers of national pride to historically opposing countries. This paper uses content analysis to explore the broadcast style and design of the national anthems able to be seen in Haifa, Israel. It includes those from Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. All of the anthems showed similar characteristics including the expected display of flags. However, several showed planning and execution which carried specific propaganda value.

Modern Tools of Propaganda:
Television Treatments of National Anthems in the Middle East

Introduction

In 1992, I had the opportunity to spend seven months as a Visiting Professor at the University of Haifa in Israel. The timing and the location of my stay turned out to be fortuitous. The timing was excellent because the Israelis called for a new election off schedule and it was done in its entirety, from primaries through the actual campaign to the election, during our stay. This gave me a unique opportunity to view a foreign election and then turn around to watch our primaries from abroad, and then turn around again, and come home for our full blown election.

There turned out to be many similarities between the Israeli election results and the American election results: both populations voiced discontent with the status quo and took chances for a change as Rabin became Prime Minister and Clinton became President. And presently, both of their juries are out, as both leaders might be bloodied but are they actually down for the count?

The location turned out to be an international media watcher's dream. Through sheer luck our apartment was on the top of Mt. Carmel, a mountain situated between the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the valley of the Galilee on the east. Our apartment building faced the Galilee. To my unfolding surprise, every time I played with the television channel selector,

I found myself picking up a new channel from a different country, seven in all: two from Israel, two from Syria, two from Jordan and one from Lebanon. The possibilities of observing how they all functioned together were obvious. Thus I started watching all of the channels with rapt attention.

In the interest of academic honesty it should be noted that the writer is Jewish, speaks Hebrew and has spent, all totaled approximately two years in Israel starting twenty years ago when she was part of Sherut Leumi (National Service) in a town called Yerocham deep in the Negev Desert. The writer of this paper considers herself to be a relatively old and knowledgeable Israel hand. There probably is some pro-Israeli bias in writings about the Middle East born from a greater knowledge of that particular country. She is aware of the tendency and now so too is the reader.

General Structure of Television

All of the television programming which I was able to view over broadcast was tied into state run systems or was completely governmentally sponsored. They were all part of national systems. This was particularly evident on Jordanian, Syrian, and Israel Channel 1. It was less so on the Lebanese CBN sponsored Family Channel originating from Cyprus and on the new, hopefully and eventually self-supporting commercial Israel Channel 2 originating from Beersheva.

In a nutshell, much of the programming appeared to be, of language of origination, an instrument of propaganda traveling free of border restrictions. As my time in Israel continued, a pattern became evident as to the rules of order which were followed. These included:

1. All countries broadcast some of their entertainment programming in English.

2. Almost all countries broadcast news in their native language and in either Hebrew or Arabic, depending on the country as well.

3. News programs were set up in a counter programming pattern which allowed native speakers to watch news at a variety of times on different national systems. In other words, one could bounce from Jordanian News in Hebrew at 8 p.m. to CNN News in English aired from Lebanon at 8:30 p.m. to Hebrew news on Israeli TV at 9 p.m. At the same time there was Hebrew news on Jordanian television,there was Arabic news on Israeli TV.

4. Even though no country in the Middle East has English as its primary language, all systems have news in English.

5. All stations ended their broadcast day with a rendition of their national anthem exactly as is done in the United States.

This method of boardcasting anthems proved fascinating. These are countries, not at peace, not rich, but possessing such intense national pride that it rules their every action. It remains noteworthy that these countries spend their limited financial resources on actively broadcasting beyond their own national borders, even sometimes in the opposition camp's language and in a third, unrelated language as well. The question becomes: To catch whom? And the answer clearly reads that television as a language of propaganda enhances images and reinforces political stance in the area.

Propaganda is defined as:

"any organization or movement working for the propagation of particular ideas, doctrines, practices, etc....the ideas, particular ideas, doctrines, practices, etc. spread in this way." (Webster's, 1990)

While watching television from Israel, it became apparent that much of the television programming carried a nationalistic message. This was not true 100% of the time but there was a message. This became truly observable when observing the closes of the broadcast days and the productions of the individual national anthems which were broadcast.

It is obvious that any national anthem possesses the chauvinistic seeds of identity and unity. This fact is undisputed. (How many times have we all seen a United States station sign-off with the Star Spangled Banner holding forth as a formation of jet fighters streaks across a cloudless sky with the Stars and Stripes superimposed over it?) However, the presentation of some of anthems takes on a decidedly different bent when produced on some of the stations in the Middle East. The message is transcultural as well as intracultural.

Selected Background

Although nothing could be located which exactly addressed the issue of national anthems as a propaganda tool, much has been written about propaganda both from a general semiotic viewpoint as well as from a biased control of information vantage point.

Much of the modern debate surrounding propaganda finds its roots in the analysis of Nazi Germany and the images which de-

veloped around that period. Ades (1976) examines the actual images of illustration propaganda as seen through poster, art and even movies of German Expressionism such as Lang's Metropolis. Conclusions include the aesthetic power of pictures, both still and moving. Fraser (1957) also begins his essay discussing the development and effectiveness of Nazi propaganda but moves beyond that into the use of basic propaganda rules by the communists. He looks at message design and the inconsistency of double talk as well as the overuse and misuse of "its propaganda devices" which will cause a redesign of techniques in their future (pp. 153-156).

Other authors take a much more theoretical direction when analyzing the components of propaganda. Dovring (1959) delves into the inherent characteristics of language and language differences as a basis for propaganda. A discussion of repetition as an active element in the development of an effective propaganda environment is also germane to the discussion of propaganda and anthems. Persistence is a major tool in designing effective propaganda messages (Hirsch,1982).

Methodology

A simple content analysis has been conducted concerning the visuals of the individual national anthems. This has included: descriptions of the screen content, changes in the screen content in regards to camera movement and shot set-up, length and timing of the production, and actual musical presentation of the anthem. The station location of origination has also been noted.

The actual form of this analysis has been modeled after observed critical content analyses of political advertisements. This was most recently observed in a series by the Pittsburgh-Post Gazette (February-March, 1994) which examined the advertisements of gubernatorial hopefuls before the primary.

The Jordanian Anthem as seen on Jordan TV 2

The Anthem: This anthem is entitled "A'sha el Malelk"- "Long Live The King." The literal translation reads: " Long Live the King (2).... His crown sublime...His banners flying, In glory supreme." The stanzas say that he (Hussein) is the King of all Arabs, he is descended from the finest family, he helps the youth to develop their talent and we love him for it.

The music arrangement used on television is set within a military band arrangement. There is an introduction followed by three stanzas and three segues.It was officially adopted in 1938. Duration: From fadeup to black this version lasted 2 minutes 50 seconds. From first audio to last audio it was 2 minutes 45 seconds.

The Visuals: During the introduction there is a dim up of lights. The opening shot is of young people: high schools students, juniors or seniors in western dress uniforms---boys in blazers and ties, girls in dark skirts, white blouses and little bow ties. The girls are wearing makeup. A picture of King Hussein in kaffiyah (red checked Jordanian with black band) is hung prominently over the group center stage. Two boys and one girl

are standing in front of the main group on the royal crest. The group is made of some forty or so singers. This wide/long opening shot is followed by a dissolve to the Jordanian flag. A few seconds after this there is a superimpose of the flag over young people followed by a pull-out pan of young people still under the superimpose. The group has been singing the introduction during this time. There is a segue in which there is a wide shot of the group with superimpose of flag over the group.

The actual first stanza starts with a tight shot on a girl standing in the middle of two boys in center stage. They are standing center down stage on the royal crest. After about five seconds the camera pulls out to the wide shot of the group followed by another side close-up of some another group of girls. There is a cut to the boys and then an over the shoulder pan of the rows of the group: boys and girls are standing together but are separated by gender very much as in any chorus. At the end of the stanza there is a cut to the front view of the group. The picture of the King has been changed to a picture of the Jordanian Royal Crest. During the segue the flag is superimposed over the group again.

Stanza two starts with a medium straight shot of two rows of singers, six boys in the back row, six girls in the front row. A slow zoom takes place where the camera moves in on a tight shot of the center three girls. This is followed by a cut to another group, fairly standard fare, slow pan around this group then a cut to a side view of the boys' lines until the stanza ends.

The segue is a repeat of previous ones as the picture of the smiling King reappears over the heads of the young people.

The last stanza starts with a side view of the girls' rows and then a move to other rows of boys. Then the camera moves into a line of girls followed by a close up of a group of girls, widening out to encompass the entire row, both boys and girls. On the last beat of the anthem there is a cut to the wide front shot with the flag superimposed over the group followed by a cross fade to the waving flag by itself for 5 seconds to fadeout.

Analysis: There are several observations which are inescapable about this television version of the Jordanian Anthem. The group they chose is young and western. These young people are the Jordan of tomorrow; able, attractive, serious, handsome, committed. The only visual hint as to middle eastern location and culture is seen in the King's dress and the appearance of the crest, both benevolently floating above the heads of the group. The production is sophisticated with camera movements, dissolves, etc. guided and designed by the rhythm of the music. It must be remembered that this version was seen on Jordanian Television Channel 2 broadcast primarily in English for foreign consumption.

The Israeli Anthem on as seen on Israel TV Channel 1

The Anthem: This audio for the anthem is an orchestral version without lyrics recorded by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta. The name of the anthem is "Hatikvah" - "Our Hope". It speaks about the return of Jews to the land and

the hope for the future. It was the unofficial anthem of the Jews in Palestine before independence was declared in 1948 when it was declared official. The music is based on a Slavic folk-tune familiar in its resemblance to the theme in Smetana's "The Maldau."

Duration: The time from audio fadeup to the end of audio is 1 minute 22 seconds. The flag itself remains after that for three additional seconds until one minute 25 seconds fade to black.

The Visuals: The opening view is a side view of three Israeli flags waving in the wind. The flags are arranged so that only one of them is completely visible and the other two are outlined and only partially visible in the wind. The flag(s) take up 85% of the screen, outlined by blue sky. The center Star of David is completely dominant on the screen. Thirty-two seconds into this rendition there is a a cross fade into a single waving flag. The last change in the waving flags comes at a point of crescendo in the music 19 seconds from the end when a more or less straight on view of three flags returns and one sees the three individual flags waving vigorously in the wind. This continues for three seconds past the end of the music to fade.

Analysis: The significance and use of the Israeli flag cannot be understated. It is in the design of the Jewish prayer shawl, the tallit, with a large Star of David placed on center. The colors are also biblical since they are drawn from Deuteronomy where it is commanded that there shall be a thread of blue on the tallit. Making the tallit into the flag, the symbol of nationalism,

brings together the religious and political nature of the state. Placing it solely with the national anthem reinforces one on top of another.

The Syrian Anthem as seen on Syria TV Channel 1

The Anthem: This version of the anthem is arranged in a military and style and played by a band. It is entitled "The National Anthem of the Syrian Arab Republic" with music written by Fleyfel Brothers with lyrics by Khalil Mardam. It was adopted in late 1922. The lyrics talk about guarding our country; the stars and the sky.

Duration: From first audio/fadeup to the end was 42 seconds.

The Visuals: The opening shot features a closeup of the two green stars on the Syrian flag. The flag is waving in the wind. The close-up is followed by a slow pull out to a medium shot which encompasses the entire flag. The flag is on a flag pole and the shot is angled up towards the flag. The rendition used features no lyrics and is played in military band style.

Analysis: As with the Israel Channel 1 interpretation of that anthem, the national flag plays the prominent role in the visual side of the Syrian anthem. Flags represent their countries,loyalty, and pure patriotism.

The Jordanian Anthem as seen on Jordan TV Channel 1

The Anthem: This rendition is the exact same recording as that one used on Jordan TV Channel 2.

Duration: From fadeup to black was 2 minutes 51 seconds. From first audio to last audio was 2 minutes 44 seconds.

The Visuals: The opening shot of the production before the music begins is a still shot of the Jordanian Flag followed by a second or two of the flag waving with a dissolve into a group of three standard holding male soldiers in dress fatigues with red checked Jordanian Kaffiyahs standing at attention. This is followed by a dissolve into a formation of a military band, male soldiers from seemingly all branches of the Jordanian Army and female soldiers from the different branches standing at attention and singing (or playing) their anthem. With the exception of the actual members of the band, all of the soldiers appear to be young, intense and attractive. Among the female soldiers, there is no hint of traditional Arab garb or reticence.

The studio and basic set-up is the same as that seen on Jordan TV Channel 2. A picture of King Hussein, this time in kaffiyah and military uniform is hung over the group center stage and the three standard bearers are standing on the crest. There is a conductor leading the group.

During the 30 second introduction the front wide/long shot of the group is held followed by a closeup, side shot of four kaffiyahed men with a cut to the identical shot from the opposite angle, this time featuring women. Finishing the introduction there is a dissolve to front shot with the Jordanian flag superimposed over the group. Accompanying the segue there is a wide-shot of the group followed by a superimpose of the flag over a moving shot over members of the band.

The first stanza begins with a side shot of two rows of women followed by a cut to a moving shot of a women's row backed up by a group of kaffiyahed men. There is then a cut to a similar panning shot featuring another similar group. Finishing up this section is a wide shot showing three rows of women and a slow move to a medium shot. The segue begins with a momentary unobstructed wide/long shot of the group followed by the superimposition of the flag over the group followed by a moving shot over the band also under the flag and ending in the wide shot of the group.

The second stanza opens with a moving side shot once again featuring a group of women moving to a medium shot featuring two women and then cutting to the group wide shot back to a moving medium shot again featuring women with men behind them, and then another similar moving shot ending the stanza by cutting to the front group shot. The segue is played over a stagnant front group shot.

Opening the last stanza is a medium still shot showing two rows of soldiers, the front of women and the back row of men four in kaffiyahs and two in military berets designating different branches of service. The shot slowly moves in and then there is a cut to a moving close-up side view of four women which widens out to include a partial row of men and then a cut to the standard front shot.

Finishing the stanza is a shot of both men and women sol-

diers from at least five branches of the Jordanian Armed Services as signified by differences in uniforms. As the music ends there is a pull out to the wide shot followed by a superimposing of the flag over the group and lastly a final dissolve into the flag by itself to black.

Analysis: This presentation of the Jordanian Anthem is markedly different in substance and style from that version seen on Jordan TV 2. It was extremely surprising to discover that the same musical recording was used for both. Lip syncing takes place for either one or both versions, verification is very difficult. However, an educated guess check but an educated guess is that the version was originated for the military and then used for the civilian/foreign consumption. But the difference in presentation is remarkable. This version seen on "local" Jordan TV features the defense forces while the other channel features civilian high school students. Both groups are young and westernized. It is also noteworthy that so many of the visual shots feature the women dressed in decidedly <u>not</u> traditional Arab women's garb.

It is image making on television at its best. Except for one shot which goes in and out of focus, the production is sophisticated. There is much more camera movement in this rendition than in the other Jordanian rendition. Also, the two Jordanian productions are the only ones of those discussed in this paper which feature "live" singers or the actual lyrics of the anthem.

The Israeli Anthem as seen on Israel Channel 2

The Anthem: This version is identical to the version heard on Israel TV Channel 1.

Duration: The visuals start and end with the music. The entire piece lasts 1 minute 19 seconds.

The Visuals: This interpretation features a visual fly-over of the city of Jerusalem. It opens with a view of the old city with the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the center. There is then a cut to other sections of the city, the University, the Shrine of the Book holding the Dead Sea Scrolls, housing projects, apartment buildings, and the Knesset (Parliament) Building. In the closing dramatic moments, complete with crescendo, there is a return to the old city with a shot of the area including the mosques and the final shot featuring the Western Wall center screen.

Analysis: It is interesting that this version of the Israeli anthem was created by the non-Jerusalem based station. The symbolism is no accident. The fly-over of Jerusalem is visually beautiful in this version of the Israeli anthem. The day is perfect and the monuments built from white stone stand out against the blue sky.

However, the fly-over itself is inflammatory. It uses the united Jerusalem as the symbol of nationhood which can, by implication be taken to mean that the united Jerusalem, both the western and disputed eastern sections, are Israel once and forever. The Palestinian and Arab factions in the region dispute this

fact, and the United States very pointedly does not center its embassy there but rather in Tel Aviv. Israel annexed East Jerusalem over twenty years ago and declared the united Jerusalem to be its Capital. So, it is shown in this interpretation of the anthem just as Washington, D.C. and all of its national monuments are displayed as a background for many versions of the United States' Star Spangled Banner. The production is well shot,clean and evenly edited. With the exception of one shadow of the helicopter reflected from the ground, the video shooting is tight.

The Lebanese Anthem as seen on CBN Sponsored Lebanese TV

The Anthem: The music is performed in military style by a band. The music was composed by Wadih Sabra with lyrics by Rachid Nakhle. The lyrics repeat the theme of "our land, our flag, our pride." No adoption date was available.

Duration: The actual anthem is played under visuals for its entirety. This lasts for 28 seconds. It is followed by 9 seconds of just the flag waving in silence.

The Visuals: The opening of the anthem is a cross fade from a flag which acted as a background for the announcements about "the end of another broadcast day...." to a snow capped mountain to a view of a walled city by the sea. This is followed by a close-up of a poppy with three quick cross fades to other flowers in fields. Next is a view of an aqueduct from crusader times and then another cross-fade and pullout of a panorama view of hills and a valley. At the final beat of the music there is a crossfade to a medium up-shot of the flag and then a fade to black.

Analysis: It is interesting that this interpretation of an anthem from a war torn country is so peaceful. All pictures other than those of the flag show the natural wonders of the area and various locations in the country. One can only hope that the Lebanese people and the other peoples in the region can establish the peace which everyone appears to want.

Conclusion

The one aspect which every rendition had in common was the inclusion and featuring of the national flag. Three of the six anthems set their renditions entirely with the flag alone. All of the flags of the Arab countries include the colors of Red, White, and Green, sometimes for the same, sometimes for differing reasons, both religious and secular. Both Jordan and Syria also include black representing the Ạbbassid Caliphate of Islam. Universally the flag remains a rallying point and a symbol of national unity.

When judging the propaganda value of the presentation of the national anthems, this writer used the television presentation of the "Star Spangled Banner" as the norm. Within this context it appears that both the Lebanese and Syrian renditions are fairly standard fare: waving flags or land scenes and waving flags accompanied by the national anthem. This is not the case with Israel and Jordan.

A presentation of a disputed territory ten miles from the people who are disputing the land seems a bit like rubbing salt. But this is the presentation which Israel TV 2 has chosen to make

of its national anthem. It is neither subtle nor can it be assumed that it was a mistake. Video concepts are not realized by mistake.

The flag as a background for Israel Channel 1 is a statement of national pride. It is simple but pointed and understandable. This is within the realm of acceptable national behavior but still a statement of propaganda.

It is Jordan's two versions of their anthem which remains fascinating in the image which is projected. That image is decidedly un-Arab and highly westernized. One version is completely civilian while the other is completely military. From either perspective, the projected image, complete with King, is one of careful engineering. Jordan is setting forth a picture, not of who she is in reality, but where she wants to go. This is not too unlike Israel 2 and its vision of united Jerusalem, the capital of Israel.

Posturing and propagandizing is part and parcel of the business of nation building. What is observed in the presentation of national anthems among some of the middle eastern countries, is in the great scheme of things, curious and innocent. The signing of the various middle eastern treaties and accords has done little to change the projected national media images and self-images.

To the casual observer, the national pride and projected images seen on television is simply part of the jockeying for

position within a region on the brink of hope and peace. Only the future will decide what face television propaganda will wear in a this region struggling with the structure of its very existence.

Mass media studies usually confine themselves to American settings, but since television in the rest of the world is usually state-sponsored, media students can benefit from examining studies of foreign media approaches.

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